

County of Los Angeles – Department of Mental Health  
OFFICE OF THE MENTAL HEALTH COMMISSION

Thursday, January 26, 2012

~ Approved Minutes ~

**Please note the minutes are a brief summary and not a word for word transcription of events at this meeting.**

**Larry Gasco, Chairman, Presiding**

**I. Call to Order – Larry Gasco**

- The meeting was called to order by Larry Gasco
- Roll Call by Canetana Hurd, Commission Staff  
Attendance recorded as follows:  
Absent Excused: Greg Thompson, Ilean Rabens, Carlos Sosa, Herman L. DeBose, and Phillip Chen
- Approval of Minutes – Larry Gasco  
December 2011 minutes were unanimously approved.  
**MSC - Perrou/Huffman**

**II. Chairman's Report – Larry Gasco**

- **EMS Commission Update** – Lt. Andy Ramirez, Emergency Medical Services Commissioner, was invited by Dr. Barry Perrou to update the Commission on the status of alternative transportation for patients who are placed on a 5150 hold in police vehicles. Lt. Ramirez reported a meeting took place to move forward on the issue. The plan is to develop a proposal based on the following components, 1) initiate a pilot project and select specific area with the cooperation of an ambulance company, 2) expand MET, and 3) identify a hybrid between an ambulance and car. The information will be evaluated and analyzed. Outcomes will be presented in a report to Supervisor Don Knabe.
- **Executive Committee Report** – Delores Huffman gave the Executive Committee report from the January 12, 2012 meeting. Topics discussed were: 1) new Commissioner, Herman L. DeBose, 2) jail tour planned for March 2012, 3) increasing the commission's budget, 4) Connections for Life conference-April 18 and Stepping In conference-April 25.
- **MHC/SAAC Chairs Report** – The SAAC group continued discussions to implement technology in future meetings and possibly develop an info book. Paul McIver discussed the history of AB 3632 and the impact of its dissolution in January 2012.
- **Empowerment Congress Conference** – Commissioners attended the Empowerment Congress Conference sponsored by Supervisor Mark Ridley-Thomas' district this month. Delores Huffman reported the conference had a good turn out. Ms. Huffman attended the disparities workshop. Rev. Al Sharpton was the keynote speaker. He inspired the audience to do more and less rhetoric.

### III. **Presentation – Veterans Mental Health Programs**

Carl P. McKnight, PsyD, Mental Health Clinical Program Head

Dr. Carl McKnight is a veteran who served in the US Army discussed veteran facts from RAND Cooperation, Veteran Administration, and LA County. Thirty percent of the veterans returning from the war will suffer PTSD, depression, substance abuse, and anxiety disorders. The southern region (LA and San Diego) have the most number of returning veterans in the nation. LA County has the most homeless veterans in the US. This number includes not only men but single mothers with children.

DMH policy was changed in 2008 allowing vets, regardless of military discharge to be seen at all directly-operated clinics. No vet will be denied mental health services. The policy was changed to refer vets to the appropriate services, open veterans service offices and organizations, and assist vets determine eligibility for federal benefits through Department of Military and Veteran Affairs. Veteran Mental Health Program units are, Homeless Outreach-funded by the one and only PATH grant, Military Families and PTSD, Budget and Contracts, and 4) Suicide Prevention.

The Department of Military and Veteran Affairs (DMVA) offers employment, education, benefits assessment, housing, case management, and substance abuse. DMH is collaborating with DMVA to develop services for combat veterans and their families. The Bob Hope Patriotic Hall is under renovation (due to open September 2012) to become a one-stop service center for expansion of services and resources for veterans in need of mental health treatment. Existing programs such as Veteran Outreach Program will relocate to Patriotic Hall and work in collaboration providing consultation and evaluation to veterans who require more intensive mental health services. The proposed budget for the Patriotic Hall service center is approximately \$941,000 paid by MHSA PEI funds.

DMH Veteran Liaisons are assigned to each service area plus one for the jail. The liaison's main responsibility is to provide outreach and engagement to communities' un-served and underserved mentally ill population. The department also partners with the USC Military School of Social Work for coordination of services and assistance to veterans and their families.

### IV. **DMH Report**

Dr. Robin Kay, Chief Deputy Director discussed the proposals submitted by DMH for the Challenge Innovations grant funding. Dr. Kay invited Commissioners to participate in advisory groups to review grants and participate in community outreach. The proposal will address primary care, substance abuse, and mental health to:

- Better address high utilizers in health and mental health
- Coordinate care benefits for specially designed needs and assist clients leaving the hospital
- Establish a new urgent care medical center on King Drew Medical Center including ancillary services.
- Solicit trained health care coordinator navigators for seniors and adults and retrain health workers in mental health treatment

The proposal is a great opportunity for critical relationships on how we engage communities and populations. It prepares the mental health environment for 2014 with new learning and models, and best practices.

**Moving Forward on EMS Transportation Issue** – Commissioner Barry Perrou was appointed MHC Liaison on the EMS Commission’s plan to move forward on a proposal addressing an alternative transportation method for 5150 clients. The proposal will address public engagement, increase mental health training, and potential expansion of MET involvement.

**Legislative Report – Susan Rajlal, DMH Legislative Analyst**

Ms. Rajlal discussed Governor Jerry Brown’s 2012-13 budget proposal that includes a projected gap of \$9.2 billion. The Governor wants to close the gap with revenue increases and budget cuts. DMH is concerned about the following issues in the proposal:

- Increase to counties for state hospital rate – Counties need to understand the method used to calculate proposed cost per bed plus the 20% increase to address so they can address the financial impact on contracts for beds.
- Transition from Health Families to MediCal – Language in the proposal states “expanded mental health coverage,” this implies the county will serve 900 more children per year
- Funding – Managed care and MHP program budget projections show increases. The State’s budget methodology is unclear and possibly underestimates the cost of these programs.
- State DMH reorganization recommendations to transfer programs addressing disparities, licensing and certifications, and WET. State has long standing problems with agencies, no cooperation with licensing agencies, and wants to control the MHP dollars designated for mental health training.

Ms. Rajlal provided a handout with instructions on how to look up a bill, links to find out where your legislator stands and committees they are on, and their opinions.

**Motion** – The Commission draft a letter to Governor Jerry Brown about the value and contributions made by the California Mental Health Planning Council and the California Association of Local Mental Health Board and Commissions not to eliminate these advisory bodies. **MSC – Baron/Lubin**

## V. Commissioners' Reports

**Barry Perrou** – Dr. Perrou recommended the commission move forward on the visit to the Jail for the March 22 meeting.

**Judy Cooperberg** – Ms. Cooperberg commented there are a vast number of veterans in the Antelope Valley but the stigma of mental illness continues to be a barrier for service delivery.

**Frank Baron** – Mr. Baron and several other Commissioners attended the quarterly CALMHBC meeting in San Diego in January 2012. Mr. Baron stated that smaller counties have been coming to the meetings. The next meeting will be in Los Angeles in April 2012.

**George Caballero** – Mr. Caballero announced the LA City Major's Office will take on student interns in their older adults city programs.

**Delores Huffman** – Ms. Huffman announced the Planning Council is accepting applications for membership slots.

**Jerry Lubin** – Mr. Lubin gave an update on the Gateways zoning issue. He anticipates lawsuits due to the continued resistance from the city zoning ordinance.

**Victoria Sofro** – Ms. Sofro reported the Connections team is working hard for the upcoming conference to be a great success. Employment numbers became public which helps the conference focus on the benefits of supportive education leading to employment.

**Hayward McNeill** – Mr. McNeill commented San Diego has an impressive suicide action plan. Los Angeles County should have one.

**Howard Askins** – Dr. Askins commented on the Clinical Policy meeting held yesterday. He explained why the Clinical Snapshot lag is several months. The lag time allows accurate numbers to be in the report.

## VI. Community and SAAC Reports

### **LACCC (Los Angeles County Client Coalition) – Pam Inaba**

Pam Inada reported the Innovations Conference will be held February 4, 2012 at the Endowment. The coalition is planning a Leadership Summit in collaboration with all affiliations, e.g., Latino and BLACCC groups.

**VII. Public Comments –**

**Maria Elena Juarez** – We had a Latino Coalition election.

**Phyllis Coto** – Selected to the Access Para transit Advisory Board. I would give recommendation to the board on behalf of the Access clients.

**Cary Temple** – These are my observations and concerns of the MHSA Recovery Mode and Structure planning and implementation. Usually at our stakeholder/other persons invited to attend meetings for approval of the various plans are given a passage which needs timely reading to recommend changes or acceptances for approval. There is no transparency of information and guideline goals for the knowledge given to accomplish the necessary needs for the stakeholders' approval providing the goals of the findings for approval. What was the information for the resources and qualifications the MHSA of most stakeholders including staff, effected community, consumer, family members and family advocates? What was and is the knowledge of MHSA and it is for transformation to mental health services and structure.

**Carey Grier** – Health Navigator Certification training – -How can peers who are trained as MHW, Peer Advocates, Peer Partners and etc., to obtain the training if we aren't employed at this time with DMH or contract agencies? Will there be more Health Navigator training in the works soon after the training in March at Pacific Clinics? Need additional training for peer advocates, peer partners to move up the ladder in LA County Mental Health.

**Dennis R. Miller** – Problem still exists in over weight problems and people dying before 50. Need for services for veterans. Western University Dental School has very affordable dental care.

**Dr. Dennis O'Brien** – We would like to have clients involved with the grant process. Also we would like to have a legislative forum with the commission's support to set legislative goals.

**Sawako Nitao** – Yesterday, I heard the guy jumped from the building to commit suicide but nothing on TV covered it as big news. I think not showing only number of deaths but also telling us about homeless suicides.

**Mark Karmatz** – At Alternatives Conference in 2008 there was a workshop called Peer Evaluators Project - Each One Reach One Teach One.

**VIII. Meeting adjournment/Next Meeting information**

**Thursday, February 23, 2012**

**12 – 2:30 pm**

**Kenneth Hahn Hall of Administration**

**500 W. Temple Street – Room 739**

**Los Angeles, CA 90012**

Please contact the Commission office at (213) 738 4772 if you need more information

Minutes prepared by Canetana Hurd